



Charlotte Mason's House of Education,
Scale How, Ambleside, UK, 2009

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OUR WORK.

House of Education.—Next term begins Saturday, January 14th. *Meditations.*—It will perhaps be more convenient to subscribers to pay their subscription for the whole year (3s.) to George Middleton, Ambleside, instead of term by term. Nos. 1—30 will be sent upon receipt of 1s. 6d. We hope our friends will get us some new subscribers, as at present the cost of printing the "Meditations" is not nearly defrayed.

Parents' Review School.—Next term begins January 16th. *Mothers' Educational Course.*—We hope more new members will join the M.E.C. Those who do so write of the unfailing pleasure they take in the reading, and say how helpful they find it in their practical work with their children.

The period of preparation for each examination may be lengthened if desired, the half-year's reading extending over a year.

Natural History Club.—The special subject selected for this year is "The Stars," and a pamphlet containing outlines for a course of study, with suggestions for children's work and list of useful books, will be issued to members at the commencement of the year. The subscription to the Club is 2s. 6d., payable to Miss Blogg, 28, Victoria Street. Further details on application.

Conference.—The annual conference will be held on May 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th, 1899. Any suggestions as to speakers and subjects for discussion must be sent to the Secretary, 28, Victoria Street, before January 31st, for the consideration of the Conference Committee. Full particulars as to further arrangements will be notified in due course.

BOOKS.

Stories from American History: Buccaneers and Pirates of Our Coasts, by F. R. Stockton (Macmillan, 6/-). Mr. Frank Stockton knows how to tell a tale and has given us delightful reading about the bold Buccaneers. It is a little hard to have heroes who are not heroic except for pluck and daring and whom you do not wish to hold up for general admiration, but the author's genius has overcome the difficulty. We share in the excitement of the pirates' amazing feats without any kindly leaning towards them personally. It will probably be news to some of our readers, as it was to us, that the Buccaneers, or "Beef-dryers," originally carried on an illicit trade in dried beef, hence their name. Apart from the interest of the narratives as tales of adventure, we have in these tales of the Buccaneers an important chapter in American and West Indian history.

Hope the Hermit, by Edna Lyall (Longmans, 6/-). Miss Edna Lyall tells a pleasant tale of the Lake Country in which Skiddaw and Derwentwater and Ulleswater and Keswick play silent parts. The time is that of the Revolution, a period by no means exhausted by the historical novelist. Audrey, the heroine, is a charming study; and the hero, "Michael Derwent," is worthy of her. Audrey goes to London and sees the Queen and is kidnapped in a sedan-chair, and has other adventures and misadventures which the reader follows with sympathy and interest. Zinogle the fiddler

Father Noel, John Radcliffe, are cleverly caught and convincing, especially the last. The author appears to have made a study of quaker thought and feeling; Nathaniel Radcliffe, a serene and dignified Friend, appears more than once with great effect as *deus ex machina*. *Hope the Hermit* should afford very pleasant holiday reading.

The Union of Italy, 1815-1870, by W. J. Stillman (University Press, 6/-). Mr. Stillman writes with profound knowledge of his subject; with love, if it be the love of a disappointed lover, for Italy, mistress of many hearts. He gives us a very thorough and very careful study of events from 1815-1870, dealing with the march of events in the several principalities of now United Italy in turn. The volume is not written in the heroic strain, but the heroic temper of the "Young Italy" party throbs under the sober narrative, thus—"Confalonieri, arriving ill of asthma at Vienna, became the object of the most powerful temptations to betray his confederates"; he is interviewed by Metternich himself, who tells him that to satisfy his Majesty it would be necessary, "That you make a call on your memory," to which the prisoner replied, "Alas, I should only find there heart-pains—all the rest is obliterated." Confalonieri atoned for his devotion to Italy by thirteen years in a dungeon eight paces long and four wide. The sufferings of Confalonieri and his companions, especially of the well-known Silvio Pellico, roused the indignation of the civilised world and "did more to relax the chains that held Italy bound than all the risings which Austria suppressed." Mazzinni, Cavour, Garibaldi, the poet Alfieri, the noble brothers Bandiera, a hundred names we are all familiar with, figure in these pages; and, though the author's standpoint is probably not that of most of us (in that he considers that Italy should have sought her deliverance through the support of Austria), yet the volume treats with singular ability of perhaps the most interesting chapter of contemporary history. The author's final note is a sad one, "Too quickly and too easily was Italy made."

Letters to his Son on Religion, by Roundell, First Earl of Selborne (Macmillan & Co., 3/6). The late Earl of Selborne did a valuable service to all fathers in these letters on religion addressed to his son. Few young people are allowed to escape emotional appeals on the subject of the religious life, and their elders have some cause to lament the impatience or indifference with which such appeals are commonly received. But very few intelligent young people at, say, the period of their confirmation, would be indifferent to this intellectual, impersonal statement of the grounds of religion, rather above than below their capacity, yet always clear, simple, conclusive and, above all, reverent. The volume is the outcome of a robust and reasonable faith, and is free from traces of panic or irritation at the unfaith in the world. An appeal to their intelligence on the great questions of life nearly always meets with a cordial response from young people; and an objective knowledge of religion, methodic and fairly complete, is what they really want, and are aware that they want, before they willingly yield themselves to its subjective influence.

Open Air Studies (Geology), by G. Cole, F.G.S. (Griffin & Co., 8/6). This book is dedicated "to all who like seeing things for themselves in the open air." Professor Cole has given us a very thoughtful and delightful introduction to geology, beginning in the only sound way. He

takes us into *A Mountain Hollow, Down the Valley, Along the Shore, Across the Plains, to A Dead Volcano, A Granite Highland*, and he opens our eyes and teaches us to observe and infer, and to interpret the great changes that have taken place in the earth's surface by these indications of change which an observant eye will note in the present. Geology in the professor's hands is no mere stone and hammer science, but is quick with the beauty of the world and with the curious interest which attaches to the action of living forces. The student, who has gone carefully through these pages, will question sea-cliff and boulder, comb and ravine, moor and mountain hollow, until each yields up its secret and tells, clearer than a print page, why it is that which it is. We wish there had been a chapter devoted to "Landscape and Formation," dealing, for example, with such facts as the lovely green of the lower slopes of the West Riding fells, and the harsh and sombre aspect of their summits. Why? Because the Fells are of limestone capped with millstone grit, the one yielding a turf nearly as soft and verdant as that of the chalk, the other a sparse covering of heather. We hope many students will avail themselves of Professor Cole's charming out-of-door introduction to geology.

Open Air Studies in Botany, by E. L. Praeger (Griffin & Co.) Professor Lloyd Praeger's book is on somewhat similar lines to that of Professor Cole. Every plant is studied in its own habitat behaving as 'tis its nature to. "We stand," says the Professor, "in fancy out in the open country with the wild flowers at our feet, the hum of insects and the rustling of the wind in our ears. . . . Thus only can we hope to comprehend the life of a plant or of a plant community, and appreciate the conditions under which each species lives, and the adaptations by which each is able to maintain its position in the plant world and fulfil its proper functions." This is more and more felt to be the true spirit in which botany must be studied. Mr. Praeger takes us to examine the plants of the daisy-starred pasture, of the riverside, of the shingle, of the hedgerow, of the bog, even of a city rubbish heap; and we are much the better prepared to treat plants with sympathetic interest when we begin by perceiving how they get their livings. It rests with the student to find, in his own neighbourhood, localities as much as possible like those Mr. Praeger describes, where he will probably find the same orders of plants. We rejoice in a book which requires that the botanist should be, in the first place, a field-naturalist.

The Flowering Plant, by A. Davis (Griffin & Co., 3/6). A simple and clearly written manual, dealing chiefly with vegetable morphology and vegetable physiology. The author says in his preface:—"The present work has been written with the intention of illustrating the first principles of botany by means of common flowering plants. No previous knowledge is assumed and the style is made as simple as possible." The style of the book justifies the preface, the arrangement is excellent, and the teaching is up to date.

Cookery for Common Ailments, by P. Browne (Cassell & Co., 1/-). "This book," we are told, "is intended to serve as a practical dietetic guide to the invalid and in its pages it is hoped the reader will find the food problem stated . . . in the form of actual dishes which will prove

both digestible and palatable." The special feature of the book seems to us to be that every "common ailment," such as gout, rheumatism rickets, scurvy, scrofula, anæmia, has its own series of menus. We feel that the ailments will jostle and be jealous of each other. Certainly some of them enjoy far nicer dishes than do the other poor things. The dietaries appear to us to be very sensibly arranged.

A Year's Cookery, by P. Browne (Cassell & Co., 1/-). "This book is intended to supply menus for every day in the year, with recipes for the dishes recommended and practical instructions for their preparation." We are very glad to welcome a cheap edition of "Phyllis Browne's" invaluable cookery book. No housewife should be without it. The menus for breakfast, luncheon and dinner, the directions for marketing and the thoroughly practical instructions for cooking, could hardly be improved upon.

THE "P.R." LETTER BAG.

[The Editor is not responsible for the opinions of Correspondents.]

DEAR EDITOR,—May I call the attention of the readers of the *Parents' Review* to the Art for Schools Association, which has existed for some 15 years under the presidency of Mr. Ruskin. A quotation from the Society's report will best explain its aims:—

"Objects of the Association.—The Art for Schools Association was founded in 1883, with the object of supplying an educational basis for the good work already being done by Loan Exhibitions of Pictures in poor districts of London and other large towns. . . . The idea of the founders of the Art for Schools Association was that much might be done to educate and feed the taste of children by simply placing in the class-rooms of Elementary Schools, a few good prints and photographs of beautiful and interesting works of art, such as most people of taste take care to have in their own houses. With this view, they put themselves in correspondence with the principal art publishers of London, and obtained permission to sell to Elementary Schools such of their publications as seemed most likely to interest the young, at rates much below the market prices. The catalogue* of the works supplied in this way through the agency of the Art for Schools Association comprises upwards of 400 photographs, engravings, etchings, and chromolithographs, from the works of old masters and living artists, as well as studies from nature, of birds, and beasts and flowers."

The founders' idea that children's taste should be fed on that which is good applies as much to our own nurseries and schoolrooms as to Elementary Schools, and many mothers may be glad to find in a visit to the office, 29, Queen Square, Bloomsbury, an opportunity of choosing something to decorate their walls, which would prove not only a lasting, but an increasing pleasure.

* Price, 4d. School-marked, 6d.